

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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KESTELL OF GREYSTONE.

A SERIAL STORY.

By ESMÈ STUART.

Author of "*Muriel's Marriage*," "*Joan Vellacot*,"
"*A Faive Damzell*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LAW OF A MAN'S OWN MIND.

A WEEK had gone by. A week—what work will it not accomplish, this unrelenting, eternity-like time, this ever-moving yet changeless time? It works, it is never idle. It heals wounds; but, also, it conceals lasting sores; it brings rest and creates restlessness, and calls itself the great healer, and yet many say that it destroys as often as it heals. The knowledge of time forces us to believe in eternity.

To Elva Kestell that week was as a foretaste of purgatory. It uprooted every belief she had seemed to possess; it made her doubt in goodness, in faith, in everything; but it did not crush her. When the forge hammer comes down upon the metal, then its strength is tested. Elva refused to be crushed, and, during that week, she gave Hoel a week to answer as the limit of time. She went about as usual; she stopped none of her preparations, and not one word about the subject escaped her lips.

A week was ample time for Hoel to answer. She had written to his lodgings. He could hardly be gone, or, if gone, he could not have gone far. Her letter would be sent on; he would write and explain everything. It was not possible to keep silent—not possible. But the week went by, and Elva said "ten days."

Then ten days went by, and Elva began

to realise, yes, only began then to realise that something had happened which would alter all her life.

Had she known some reason, she said, "I could have borne it;" but to have none, none; to have this curtain let down, suddenly, which hid all the joy of her life, was maddening. Worse still, her pride—and Elva was naturally proud, though she had hardly realised it before—began to assert itself. A less strong, proud nature would have been crushed—struck down by this sudden storm. Elva, on the contrary, stood up straighter, and called up all her pride to her help.

She must have been utterly mistaken. She had given her best, her sweetest, to a man who, in a moment, could cast it from him. It seemed so strange, so utterly impossible, that no theory could fit into it; no ordinary rules explain it.

Now the days of suspense were over. She was thankful for these ten days of silence, even in her agony, for she thought: "I have now the power to face the world. It must be faced. I will take it on myself—let him go free. I can be generous, if he is incapable of being so."

So, one cold, cheerless November afternoon, Elva entered the study before the lamp had been brought in, and just when the uncertain wintry light blurred the outline of every object, and she said quite firmly:

"Papa, will you do something for me?"

Mr. Kestell had been better since that fatal day. He seemed to have rallied his powers. Still, the sight of Elva was a daily sorrow.

"Yes, darling; anything for you."

"Will you tell mamma and other people that our engagement is broken off, and that I am responsible for it? I am. If he

came now I would say the same. It is ten days since we spoke about it."

"My poor child; he will never come back. You are right."

"Don't pity me, please. Spare me what people will say. But no, they will not dare say anything to me, and I need not think of the rest. I will tell Amice."

Elva had gone through her task, and she walked out of the room. When she reached the hall she paused. Then she noticed that Amice's umbrella was not in its accustomed place. Her sister must be visiting her poor people; but she would soon return. In the sitting-room, Elva heard Symee's gentle voice reading aloud to her mother.

How desolate the place was! Every corner seemed more or less associated with Hoel. "Hoel, Hoel, Hoel," she called out silently; and no answer could come. "You won my love," she said, "and now you have despised it. Was it so worthless. No, no; I know it was not. I would have loved you so truly. I would have helped you in everything; but you despised me and what I could give. Perhaps you always thought little of women, and now find that you made a mistake in fancying I was able to help you. Why should I mind, if he does not? But I do—I do; though no one shall ever know it. Other girls have been forsaken, jilted. Some have died of it; but I will not—no, I will not. Why am I not like Amice? She would not have been bound by the human love, she would have soared higher. I have not done this—I cannot."

She hastily put on a red cloak and a hat that hung in the hall, and went out down the drive and through the gate which led out upon the bridge. Ah, just here she had met Hoel; and here, yes, here, Walter Akister had crossed their path, and had scowled on them. Had his curse borne fruit? Strange, foolish fancies! She walked on and stood on the bridge. All was terribly desolate. It had rained in the morning, and the tree-twigs were still moist and dripping. A grey shade was over the landscape; out yonder on the high lands the winds would be blowing, here it was sheltered. Elva would willingly have gone off at once upon the wild forest-land, and tried, as in the old days, to feel the same freedom as before, to feel that she was one with Nature; but it was too late now, and, besides, all was out of tune. The peace which belongs to Nature, even in her wildest moods, and which Elva had

shared, in spite of strange, unfulfilled longings, was gone—gone. The discord that belongs to the human race, as apart from so-called inanimate nature, had entered her heart.

"I am not the same," she thought, as disregarding the damp air, she leant over the parapet. "I never shall be again, never; I cannot be resigned. I am not good, I cannot understand, I will not see that it is right; it is not right. No, no; but I will try and hide it from the world. That is all I can do."

Future aggravating details presented themselves to her, just as a man might be annoyed by the buzzing of flies when he was lying mortally wounded. The Fitzgeralds would be so curious; Mrs. Eagle Bennison would condole; Miss Heaton would lift her eyebrows; and even George Guthrie, her old friend, would perhaps tease her. How she hated the thought of all this! She could have borne her misery better if she might have retired to a convent, or gone right away; but where could she go alone? Her mother would not hear of such a thing, and Amice and she could not both leave together. Life was hateful, only made up of suffering, only—

She looked up and saw Amice standing close beside her.

"Elva, dear, it is damp; why are you here?"

"I was waiting for you."

"For me. I am coming indoors." Then the hardness of the tone struck Amice. She had guessed something was the matter, but had not dared to think of it. "Elva, something is the matter; tell me?"

"The matter, yes, and no. My engagement with Mr. Fenner is broken off; but you were never very friendly with him—you will not mind much."

Amice remained speechless. The curse had indeed fallen, and Elva was so hard over it—which meant that she was suffering intensely.

"Did you break it off?" she murmured.

"I shall say so."

"To clear him. Oh, I never thought he would be so cruel. I see now he was not worthy, not worthy of you; and yet, when I saw him, I—"

"You saw him," said Elva, passionately. "When? Tell me, did he come here?"

She seized Amice's hand with an energy which she had never used before.

"Yes, he came here."

"And you saw him? Why did he not ask for me?"

"I do not know. Leave it alone; leave it alone. He was not worthy of you."

How strange that Amice should use the same words! But what had Hoel done?

"You must, you shall tell me where you saw him!"

"In the wood. Oh, Elva, don't ask me any more. I do not know; but it is the—"

"The what?"

"The curse of gold. It has fallen on you, too."

"What nonsense, Amice; you have said things like that often. You imagine because we are rich that we must be cursed. It is utterly false. And if Hoel has this idea, too, then he is very wrong. But he knew all about it before—before I loved him."

"Does mamma know? What will papa do?"

"Do? Amice, you madden me. I tell you I take it on myself, entirely."

"But it is not true." And Amice raised her blue eyes to her sister's face, and then clung to her.

"Oh, Elva, Elva, if I could have borne this for you, I would have done so, so willingly. Surely if we are punished, there may be a place found for repentance."

"Repentance, his—then—"

"He is ungenerous, he is not noble. But it is a law, such a pitiless law—the just for the unjust."

Elva did not understand; she was not trying to do so. Suddenly she gave way.

"Amice, Amice, you are so good. You have never loved so entirely, so helplessly, as I have done. What can I do? What shall I do? I loved him so much, so much. I do now, even now, though my heart seems filled with bitterness. It is not I that have given up, he has done it, and without giving me one reason, Amice—do you hear?—not one. I am young and strong; it will not kill me. I am well, quite well, even after these ten days. Ten days—do you believe me?—ten days, and not one line. It is true—true. But you must tell no one. Sometimes I feel I must hate him, and yet I can't. If I could, I should be happy. I have prayed—yes, prayed to think little of him, and I can't—I can't."

Was this Elva? How changed she was! Amice knew now that some great turning-point had come—the curse, whatever it was, in its fullness. Hoel Fenner knew it,

and he had forsaken the doomed house. Why should he join his lot with theirs? And yet Elva knew nothing of it—must know nothing of it—she who so loved her father.

How was she to offer comfort? There was but one way. And there, on the bridge, with the weariness of the damp day spreading itself over the beautiful valley, and over the dank grass by the weird pool, Amice resolved.

"I don't know how, but somehow there must be restitution—somewhere; and then— Oh, prayer is powerful, and God must hear me. Let it fall on me, but not on her."

Aloud she said:

"Tell me how I can help you."

"How? Never mention his name; let me forget him. I must, I must in time. But, Amice, he may yet come."

"He will never come."

"How do you know? Are you all in league against me?"

"Come in, dear, dear Elva. Is it not best to know the truth?"

"The truth? There is none. Well, let us go in, and keep my counsel. You and papa accept the inevitable easily."

Elva's bitterness was terrible to Amice.

"I and papa. He said Mr. Fenner would not come back?"

"Yes, he said so ten days ago."

"The bitterness of death is manifold," said Amice, half to herself, as the two went back.

As they entered the house, the wind swept up the valley, and seemed to heave one long sigh.

As they passed up the drive, Amice instinctively looked towards her father's study windows. One of them had no shutter up, as Mr. Kestell liked to be able to look out. A red curtain was drawn across; but it was illuminated by a lamp behind it.

Elva noticed the look, and answered it.

"Papa is very good. I will try and spare him. He will tell mamma. I don't think I could do that. She will ask so many questions."

"Yes," said Amice.

Their steps on the gravel were heard plainly in the study. Mr. Kestell was there, and moved the curtain slightly aside to see out. It was only for an instant. One glance seemed to tell him that it was Elva and her sister.

He let the curtain drop and walked back to his knee-hole table, and sat down in his

arm-chair. That interview with Elva had tried him severely; but also it had given him strength. All the time she had been out he had been recovering himself; only now he could put his thoughts together.

"She has left off expecting him now. It is better so. Let me see what can be done. A few weeks more, and it would have been all right—a wife has so much power over her husband, so very much. Still, a little thing may disturb a whole life. I will think that it is best. Only cowards go back on the past. The future is in the hands of everybody. One can do so much for the future. How much or how little does he know? Or is it mere guess work? He saw Button. I have found that out. Button died a week too late. He had great vitality, that man. Had he guessed something? Anyhow, again, I was right. I have those deeds. Had they been in his possession I could not have taken them away. He left them here till he should call for them. They are waste paper to everybody. Quite useless—not worth the paper they are written on. That is all on the safe side."

Mr. Kestell paused, and his hand nervously took up several papers and letters and replaced them under his letter weights.

"Vicary knows nothing; he would have been down here at once. He may guess; but if so, he guesses wrong. He can be made to accept my offer. Card will oblige me in this—he is not a questioning man. Fenner is away. It all came of their making friends. Who could have foreseen and prevented that? No one. Without work, Vicary must turn his thoughts to another country. It is so usual to emigrate now; every one who can't get on here does it. I have done nothing but what was kind and good towards him. Without me, they would have been workhouse children. Another man would have given up or sold that property at once. I waited and lent the money.

"I have robbed them of nothing, nothing—not a penny piece. Here is my account-book. The sums spent during all those years. It comes to over four hundred pounds. The rest I gave them. I don't grudge it in the least."

Mr. Kestell ran his fingers through his white hair.

All these words passed through his mind; they were even pronounced mentally by him with the same distinctness as if he had spoken them aloud; but at the same

time he seemed to possess two clear identities, and his other self scorned the words of justification much as the publican might have scorned the Pharisee's words, had he heard them.

Yes, this other self scarce lifted up his eyes as he listened, and then both were silent as Mr. Kestell, in the flesh, rose again and went to a tiny drawer inside the flap of his old bureau. From the drawer he took with trembling fingers a small bottle. It was labelled and corked down firmly, with a bit of skin carefully fastened over the cork.

Mr. Kestell walked with it to the window, held it up to the light, and examined it closely. He must have done this before, as all his actions seemed mechanical.

"It seems strange not to believe in death when a few drops of this would kill one. Very strange. Other people die—every one must die. This is easy to believe; but that we ourselves die, must die, that is a difficult problem. Sooner or later that veil must be withdrawn. I have done so much for life, so much for their lives and their happiness, so much for hers, why not venture a little more? Some events in life are like a snow-ball; they become so huge as they go on, they accumulate results—strange results, too.

"But why fight on; why not end everything to-night, and to-morrow be—where? That uncertainty is the crux. Religion used to touch me; now it lays a cold hand on me; it chills me; I cannot believe in it. Its influence has been lessening for years, ever since— But these thoughts are useless. I am a fool, and I know it. Man talks of a hundred paths he may choose, when in reality he is forced but to follow one; and that a very narrow one.

"Hoel Fenner has gone away pluming himself on his probity, on his high-flown sentiments. Put into a place of trial, he fails at once. He might have come forward and married her; he has enough to live on, and he has a good profession; he need not have touched a penny of my money. If the righteous are blind, then some hypocrites can see plainly. Judged by a higher law, Fenner is a scoundrel, who congratulates himself on his honourable motives. He loves himself first, best. He would never have understood my child. Elva, Elva, why should the sins of the fathers be visited on the innocent? Who says that is right? No, no, a thousand times no."

Mr. Kestell walked back to his bureau and replaced the bottle.

"Not this one—no; not now, not yet. But I must get Pink to give me some stronger draught for sleeping. I must sleep. Surely something can give me sleep. To-night, especially, I want it, for to-morrow I must tell my dear wife. That will be hard; she will feel it. At least let her rest now—one more night.

"How many men are there who have nothing to hide—nothing? Not one, if they were put in the witness-box, not one. Witness-box—what do I mean? Only for great crimes, glaring crimes, men get there. But for the others—the judges would have enough to do. And who would judge the judges?

"Poor Elva! poor child! Is it her words, her expression, that has made me like this? For one moment to feel free—free, how would it be? But to face the world, to face my wife— No, no. A man has but one path to choose, the same that he entered long ago. There is no such thing as choice and free-will—no such thing. There is but one law, self-made; yes, that is it—the law of a man's own mind."

COAL IN KENT.

It was a startling announcement to meet the eye, on the contents bills of the daily papers, "Coal in Kent." More startling than pleasant for those who know and love the pleasant fields and shores of Kent, and who have had experience of coal-fields and of the blank desolation that attends their development. One pictures the bright sea—never more bright than when seen between some gap in the rolling downs of the south coast, the white cliffs shining forth from the haze—that "white-faced shore" that seems to smile a welcome to those returning after long absence. Or perhaps it is the seaward range that is more familiar; the heights crowned with the battlements and towers of Dover Castle; the steamers stealing out or in under the guns of the frowning fortress; the fishing-boats with their flapping sails; the yachts and pleasure-boats dressed in their white canvas and gay bunting; and the whole scene alive with gentle stir and motion, as the waves rattle over the shingle and a bugle sounds from the heights, or you hear the beat of the drum and the tramp of marching men.

And then imagine all this turned into another Newcastle or Sunderland, obscured by thick wreaths of smoke, with tall chimneys rising everywhere, and grime and coal-dust covering the whole country round! Such possibilities are hidden in the lump of black coal that has been scooped out of the bowels of the earth, some eleven hundred feet below high-water mark, and just under the nose of Shakespeare's Cliff, where the trains come shrieking into daylight after their run through the long tunnel that pierces the great chalk buttress.

It was that chalk that seemed to give a kind of security that nothing very industrial should ever interfere with the pleasant dolce far niente of the Kentish coast. Nothing much can be made out of chalk. A little of it goes a long way for general purposes, and, as for the flints that come out of it, now that we no longer chip them into weapons or keep them in tinder-boxes for lighting fires, or even make gunflints out of them, their use, too, is restricted. Some church tower you may find, perhaps, built of dressed flints, or a villa or lodging house fronted in that way; but, then, people don't sink mines for them or build furnaces to burn them in, and any traffic there may be in them goes on in a gentle, unobtrusive way.

There is a story of a house built of flint, by the way, in this same chalky region, the materials for which were collected, according to accounts current in the neighbourhood, in a peculiarly simple way. The architect and builder was a school-master who took in a large number of boys on economical terms, and who was liberal in holidays, if not in diet; and taking his boys for long, breezy walks on the Downs, encouraged them to pick up flints and fill their pockets, pocket-handkerchiefs, and the insides of their caps, with the interesting, if sharp-edged objects. On their return, the boys discharged their loads into a general heap; and in this way, with patience and perseverance, the ingenious dominie acquired sufficient building materials to erect a house. A very ugly, three-cornered affair it was—and is, for the house exists to this day to prove the truth of the story—but still good enough to show the advantages to be gained by turning unconsidered trifles to account.

But whatever may be the advantages of chalk and flints, their presence seems incompatible, somehow, with any great industrial development. For though we

find the cotton manufacture going on busily in the chalk valleys on the other side of the Channel, with factories and tall chimneys planted here and there among swelling downs, yet its prosperity is intermittent, and of rather an artificial character, sustained by high customs duties, which practically exclude our Lancashire cottons from the market. And in the manufacturing districts of England, the scenery appears, somehow, to correspond with its accessories in a certain grimness and gloom. Here are moors and wastes, ironbound hills and rugged valleys, that have impressed something of their stern, unpromising character on the inhabitants of the adjoining regions; and when you come upon a coal-pit—with its gaunt, black superstructure, perched upon a hill of grimy coal-dust; its machinery working night and day with dreary clank and rattle; the whole affair—like a gibbet on a heath, or a wreck upon a desert shore—seems to be dismally appropriate to the scene. But when the talk is of coal-mines in Kent, one shudders to think of the havoc that would be wrought among the pretty, smiling hills and valleys, among the hop-gardens and orchards, the fruit farms and cherry gardens of the "civilised spot in all these isles."

Yet, if the world in general has been startled, and not a little dismayed, perhaps, by the announcement of the discovery, it may be said that the geologists have not been taken by surprise. It has long been conjectured that the southern coal-field of Britain—which attains its greatest development in the basin of South Wales, and, passing under the Bristol Channel, reappears in modified form in Somersetshire, to the north of the Mendip Hills—is continued under the chalk formations of Wiltshire and Hampshire, and so passes under the north Downs of Surrey and Kent, and beneath the Straits of Dover; and then reappears within measureable distance of the surface in the coal-fields of the north of France and Belgium, and even penetrates to the Valley of the Rhine, where it makes the banks of that mighty river hideous with the smoke and grime of busy manufacturing towns.

Yes, the coal was there probably enough, the question was—at what depth below the surface? And this was an affair which could only be roughly guessed at. The chalk formations, indeed, offer no great difficulties; their depth and range are

pretty well ascertained. But, beneath the chalk lies a great mass of clayey beds, which, at some places, may thin out to a mere film, while, at others, they reach a depth of many thousands of feet. And where these beds exist in any force, we may say farewell to any hope, or fear, of winning coal.

When first the possibility was mooted of finding coal in Kent, it was the general opinion of geologists that the Weald afforded the most likely field for trial. For there the chalk is altogether wanting, and we seem to be so much nearer that rich bottom crust of coal, which, if found, might bring back to the district some of its ancient industry in the way of iron furnaces and foundries.

Standing upon one of those heights that overlook the great basin of the Weald—say, from Knockholt Beeches or the hills about Sevenoaks—it is difficult to realise that the peaceful and intensely rural landscape was once the scene of a busy industry, a valley of a thousand fires, where ore was smelted, and iron melted and wrought, and whence came the country's chief supplies of iron ware both great and small; of big guns for the navy, and the iron railings that still adorn many an old-fashioned town and country house. The ploughed fields of the Weald are often thickly strawn with the scoræ of ancient foundries, and its clayey beds are still stored with abundance of ironstone. But the forests are gone that once supplied the charcoal for the furnaces, and iron-masters and iron-men have long ago vanished from the scene. Yet, if coal were actually—as seemed not improbable—to be found within workable distance from the surface, then might not the district be once more transformed into the scene of active busy life, diffusing wealth and prosperity on the whole country round?

And so, some twenty years ago, there was commenced an experimental boring in the Weald, which excited some interest among geologists, but which was not destined to throw much light upon the question. For the Weald turned out on the evidence of this deep boring to be a regular clay-hole. Down went the cutting-tool by slow degrees, but it was always clay, varied by shales and sandstone, till at last a depth of one thousand nine hundred and five feet was reached, the last sixty-five feet of which had consisted of Oxford clay, which promised to go on ad infinitum. And with that the attempt was abandoned

—perhaps half-way down to the coal measures, if they exist at all just in these parts.

But there were not wanting indications that showed a more hopeful state of things in a different direction. A boring for water at Chatham, for instance, reached what was pronounced to be Oxford clay within eight or nine hundred feet from the surface; and other borings suggested the hopeful inference that the huge beds of clay which had confounded the Wealden attempt, thinned out to very reasonable dimensions between that district and the London basin. Colonel Godwin Austen, who is a good authority on the geology of the southern counties, had actually indicated the general track of the north Downs as the probable route of the coal measures. And a map of the country, showing the coal measures, in Mr. Hull's excellent treatise on the British coal-fields, shows in dotted lines—which end on the coast by Dover—the “probable course of the southern coal-field.” Dover itself was pointed out as a promising field for boring operations. For, as a savant in session unfeelingly remarked: “Dover is a long way down from the top of the chalk,” a fact which a glance upwards at the summit of Shakespeare's Cliff,

Whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep,

renders self-evident.

And now we are told that a taste of coal has been brought up from a depth of no more than eleven hundred feet, from the experimental boring instituted by the authorities of the South-Eastern Railway Company. And, assuming that there is no mistake about the matter, the fact is highly interesting and important, although, from a practical point of view, everything depends on whether the seams of coal are of sufficient depth and extent to be worth the winning.

It is not to be expected, indeed, that the coal-beds of the south, if ever they are worked and brought to the surface, can compete in richness and importance with the coal-fields of the north. We must not look for coal to rival the Wallsend and the Silkestone, and the other famous brands that Northumbria offers for our burning. For the two systems of north and south are essentially different. A broad band of primitive rock stretches across England from the Wash on the Lincolnshire coast to the extreme point of Carnarvonshire;

and this band of rock, which geologists call the Silurian Bank, was in existence as a dividing reef in the distant ages, when the coal measures were originally formed. And in some way or other this Silurian rib of the old world has greatly modified the arrangement of the coal measures on either side of it.

The southern range of the coal strata seems to be the most extensively disturbed by faults and fissures, and altogether to have suffered from cosmic changes far more than the coal-fields of the north. In Somersetshire, where coal is worked to some extent, the whole series of coal-beds seem to be squeezed into a comparatively narrow trough; the seams are of no great thickness, nor of very excellent quality, and are often separated by great depths of barren, profitless sand and shale. Deep shafts are required to reach the coal, varying from five hundred to two thousand feet in depth below the surface; and altogether the expenses of winning and getting the coal carry off the lion's share of the produce. Anyhow, Somersetshire is not getting fabulously rich with coal-mining. If we pass to the other end of the same system, as developed in the Netherlands, we shall find the same conditions prevailing, extensive faults and contortions in the coal-beds, involving shafts of great depth, and offering many difficulties in working, while the coal owners are hardly able to compete in their own ground with the seaborne coals from the north of England.

Now it is quite possible that the borings for coal in Kent may light upon a coal-field in which all these conditions are favourably modified; such another basin, perhaps, as that of South Wales. In that case the consequence foreshadowed in the opening of this paper will inevitably follow. Dover and Folkestone will become like Cardiff and Swansea, the seaports of an industrial region, smothered in smoke and mephitic vapours. But the probabilities are that, even if the coal trough is eventually reached and explored, the coal-beds will be of the same character as those already worked in Somersetshire and the north of France, affording, that is, a useful supply of fuel for local and domestic purposes, but hardly likely to prove a source of wealth to any who may undertake to exploit them, or even to cause any extensive changes in the social conditions of the surrounding country.

THE BORDER CITY.

CARLISLE, of course; for Berwick, besides lacking the conventional dignity given by a cathedral, has never, from early times, when war drew away its Hanse merchants, been anything more than a border stronghold.

Carlisle, too, has very often been a place of arms, and has generally drooped, when, in times of comparative peace, the garrison was reduced. However, it has always retained, as became the original capital of Strathclyde, the instincts of a city; and two, at least, of its Bishops—Adelulf, the first of them (Henry the First's nominee), and Nicolson, in Queen Anne's time—did a good deal towards making it deserve the title.

Chester, the great Roman military station, and Shrewsbury, the town among the "scrub" by the upper Severn, were, for a short time, Border-towns; but the contest with "gallant little Wales," though severe, was short. On the Scotch frontier it lasted long enough to stamp the character of the people on both sides.

Carlisle began betimes. The Roman Agricola, marking out his chain of forts from Newcastle, westward, found a British hill town (oppidum) where Carlisle Castle now stands, on the sandstone bluff above the Eden. This he left as it was, fixing his camp on Staunix—the higher hill across the river, northward. Agricola's forts were, by Hadrian (A.D. 120), linked together by a mighty wall, which remained almost perfect till Marshal Wade, after Culloden, used a great deal of it for metalting his military road between Carlisle and Newcastle.

It was a grand work, worthy of Hadrian—the builder par excellence among Roman Emperors. He also repaired the second wall, between the Clyde and Forth; but that was of minor importance. "The Wall" ran for seventy-three miles, up hill and down dale, eight feet thick and eighteen feet high, with a ditch in front fifteen feet deep and thirty-five feet wide. South of the Wall, and at a variable distance, was the valluma—double, in some places triple earthwork—and between the two the road, stone-paved, with castles at every mile, and six watch-towers between each castle. So perfect is it still in parts, that, above the little river Gelt, close to Carlisle, an inscription tells how, when Flavius Aper and Albinus Maximus were consuls (207

A.D.) "a vexillatio (regiment) of the Second Legion hewed these stones."

Carlisle then was called Llywelydd, Latinised into Lugubalia. The *Caer* is castrum (fort), the same as the chester, caster, cetter, xeter, in many English towns. Only, in Carlisle, as in the Welsh towns, it begins; in the English names it ends the word.*

So, *Caer-Llywelydd* throve under the shadow of the Roman wall, which, almost a century after Hadrian (A.D. 208), Severus strengthened, driving back the Caledonians and repairing the Forth and Clyde line, and joining the two by cross lines of fortification. This lasted just two centuries, and then the Romans suddenly left, and the Arthur legends, of which Carlisle has its full share—his Seat, his Chair, his Round Table, and many places named after Queen Vanver (Guinivere)—mark a struggle that left the Britons of Cumbria as unconquered as those of Wales. Internal quarrels harmed them more than Saxon arms.

The Britons of Clydesdale and Annandale would not be ruled from *Caerluel*—as it was now called. A battle was fought on the Esk; the Carlisle men were beaten; and, thenceforth, Alclud, now Dumbarton (Dun breton), became the capital of the so-called "kingdom of Strathclyde." All the Saxons did, was to push along the valley of the Irthing, and occupy the plain country, called Inglewood (the wood of the English), a wedge which threatened to split in two the British Kingdom. Cuthbert, sainted Bishop of Lindisfarne (684), was at *Caerluel*, waiting for news of the raid, which, against his advice, King Edgfrith had made upon the Pictish freebooters. While the townsmen were proudly showing the Saint the Roman walls, and the cunningly-carved Roman fountain, the English were being cut to pieces in the glens of the Grampians; and scarce one was left to carry back the news of the disaster. Two centuries more, and the Danes had got across to *Caerluel*, which of course they burned.

By-and-by Danish settlers came—the "thwaites" are due to them; and by 924, Wessex, gradually absorbing all the Hephtharhy, absorbed Strathclyde also. Then

* They say it the same with "castle." In purely English names it stands last, as in Bewcastle. Among the "Welsh kind" it is first, for example, Castle Caryfort; Castle Rising and Castle Acre, are not among Welsh kind, but in the north folk of the Angles.

Cumberland half-rebelled, and Edmund had to fight, and kill, its King, Dunmail (Donnell), at Dunmail Raise, which you will see close to the coach-road above Grassmere. Edmund prudently gave the Strathclyde to the Scottish Malcolm, on condition that he should help him against the Danes, instead of siding with them. For a century and a half, Caerluel, nominally Scottish, was so neglected by its new masters that when William Rufus went there it was little better than a heap of ruins. Rufus rebuilt and garrisoned the castle, and sent up a colony of those whom he had evicted when he made the New Forest. Henry the First set about governing the land which Rufus had annexed. The Eastern Border he had placed under the Bishop of Durham. This accounts for the puzzling little bit "To Dur"—like the bit of Warwickshire enclosed in Stafford—in the very north of Northumberland. A churchman in those days was a safer Border ruler than a lazy Earl. He only had a life interest, and was less likely to try to get independent.

There was no Bishop on the Western Border. Whithern and Glasgow both had claims on Cumbria. It was within the former see; but the Bishop of Glasgow had a sort of primate's power over the whole. In defiance of this, Archbishop Thurston of York consecrated Adelulf, prior of Nostell, to the new see of Carlisle; and he and the Pope's legate together so wrought on the feelings of the Scots—after three days' "reasoning"—as to persuade them to let the Bishop live in peace, and, wonderful to relate, to bring all their English prisoners to Carlisle on St. Martin's Day, and set them at liberty. A compact was also made that henceforth war should be made according to certain rules—the beginning of the "Border Laws." Then, for a short time, Carlisle, taken by David, had a Scottish King and an English Bishop, till Henry FitzEmpress, unmindful that David had greatly helped him to the throne, forced his son, the boy Malcolm, to give up Cumbria and take the earldom of Huntingdon instead.

In John's reign Alexander revived the Scottish claim, and joined the Barons of young Louis, sharing in the excommunication which John bought from the legate. The Scots cared no more for the excommunication than they did for that which Clement thundered against Robert Bruce; but, as they could not take Carlisle, they accepted in lieu of it six manors, for which

—the English always maintained, and the Scots denied—the Scotch King agreed to do homage. When Edward the First set himself to conquer Scotland, Carlisle was half in ruins from one of those fires which were almost as disastrous in a mediæval as, nowadays, in a Japanese town. The Annandale men besieged it in 1296, and had already set the gates on fire when some townsmen lowered a strong hook and deftly fished up the Scottish leader, the suddenness of whose fate put the rest to flight. Next year Wallace, after winning the battle of Stirling, sent a force against Carlisle. His envoy was peremptory:

"My lord, William the Conqueror will have you surrender to him without bloodshed. Then he will spare your lives, and lands, and goods. If you resist, he will slay you all."

"Who is this conqueror?"

"William, whom ye call Wallace."

"But our King gave us custody of this town and castle on his behalf; wherefore, if your lord wills to have it, he must come and take it."

The Scots could not take it, though they harassed it sore then; and, afterwards, so much did the country suffer, that the first Edward, with cheap generosity, gave the Cathedral the tithes of a few livings, while his grandson's Queen, Philippa, founded Queen's College especially for Cumberland men.

At Patterdale they will show you the narrow pass along the hill-side, along which the Scots used to "prick along," and where one Morencey, thence called King of Patterdale, once stood and flung one after another, "galloway" and man, both into the lake. As brave a man as he, was Sir Andrew of Harclay, who, after Bannockburn, when Bruce thought to carry all before him, beat him off after ten days of vain attempts against the place. Harclay afterwards upheld Edward against the Barons, and captured Thomas of Lancaster, Edward's uncle, at Boroughbridge. But the Despensers and Harclay hated one another; and as the former were all-powerful, the latter went to the wall. Sir A. Lacey, of Cockermouth, the sheriff, went to Carlisle as if on a friendly visit. Harclay, nothing doubting, received the party graciously. But when they got him alone, they threw off their cloaks, and, drawing their swords, arrested him as a traitor, giving the signal to their men outside, who fell on the guards, and held the Castle. Harclay was drawn and quartered,

Carlisle, Newcastle, York, and Shrewsbury each receiving a part of him, while his head was set up on London Bridge.

It was the trick of a weak King—just such as young James the Fifth, two hundred years after, played, at the bidding of Henry the Eighth, on the Armstrongs, most faithful of Scottish Borderers. He actually summoned "Johnny Armstrong," head of the clan, into his presence; and when the chief came, expecting to be rewarded, or at least praised, for his last raid into England, he ordered him to be put to death at once.

During all the Scottish wars, the Carlisle Canons never ceased the long work of building their Cathedral. They had the Norman nave, which they wisely gave up to the townsmen as a parish, so that there might be one big building instead of two small ones; and, as fast as their poverty admitted, they added an unusually long choir, showing no signs of penury, save that it had a wooden instead of a stone roof, and whose east window is, perhaps, the finest bit of "decorated" in England. Despite its fine Cathedral, the city bore the stamp of Border savagery. On fair days—which were days of truce—it was thronged with wild moss-troopers from the Scottish dales, whom the Grahams—the chief English Border-clan—watched sullenly, hoping for a chance at them when the truce was over. Sometimes they could not resist breaking truce; thus the presence of "Kinmont Willie," in 1596, so angered the English, that, as he and his Armstrongs were quietly going home, they stealthily crossed the Liddel, fell on him, and lodged him in Carlisle Castle. Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh, keeper of Liddel-daie, however, was not one of the Tudor's "new men," to whom the best way of getting rid of a troublesome enemy was to poison him, or to treacherously seize him—as Elizabeth's "deputies" did so many of the Irish chiefs.

"Fair play's bonnie play," he cried, "and that's no fair play at a."

So, after appealing in vain to Lord Scope, the Warden, and to the English Ambassador, he took the law into his own hands, like a brave, honest gentleman as he was; found by spies in what part of the Castle Willie was; breached the wall with pickaxes; and rescued Willie, and him only, his little party—as soon as the alarm was given—shouting and blowing trumpets, as noisily as did Gideon's troop, and as effectually. Elizabeth was very

angry, and forced James to send Scott to her.

"How dared you," she asked, "take in hand a matter so desperate and presumptuous?"

"What is there that a man dare not do?" replied Scott.

Whereat, the Queen forgave him—all women love boldness—and said:

"With ten thousand such men our brother of Scotland might shake any throne in Europe."

But I am anticipating. Border laws, in force on "the debateable land," administered by the English and Scottish wardens, with a jury of six of each nation, the Scots trying the Englishmen, and vice versa, were, of course, in abeyance in war time; and, under Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth, it was usually war time, and war, too, of the cruellest kind. Henry punished the Scots for preferring a French alliance to his, by so ravaging as to leave in all Carlisle no living creature. For a parallel we must look to his daughter's dealings with Ireland. Her "desolations of Munster" were conducted in the same style, on a larger scale.

Edward the Sixth—or, rather, the Earl of Northumberland—was worse. He had a plan for setting up a middle kingdom, of which he should be head. The bishopric of Durham had been suppressed, and its palatine dignity added to his other honours. Had Edward lived, Dudley might reasonably have expected to make himself independent; and he began by cruelly repeating the methods of Lord Wharton, who, in 1544, was able to report to his master the burning of one hundred and ninety-two houses and churches, towns, stedes and castle houses, and the carrying off ten thousand four hundred cattle, twelve thousand five hundred sheep, one thousand three hundred horses, and other plunder, including "much insight," that is, household stuff.

One of Dudley's rules was that none might speak to a Scot near by the Warden's house—a sad grievance for both sides; for the Armstrongs and other Borderers had regularly come in to Carlisle markets, "business being business," no matter what matters of State might be in dispute between the two nations.

All this time Carlisle had its share not only in the wild Border life—the life of Sir Walter Scott's moss-troopers—but in the Border ballads. Johnnie Armstrong and Kinmont Willie have both their

ballads; so has the third harper of Lochmaben, who did, what more than aught else delighted a Scots Borderer's heart—outwitted the Warden of Carlisle.

"Wherever men are not ashamed of their forefathers they sing of them," says Mr. Ruskin. Perhaps, since we have no corresponding English ballads, save those about Robin Hood, we should say it is a matter of race. Whatever ethnologists may say, there is a stronger Celtic leaven along the Border than in Sussex, for instance.

Carlisle, being a southern colony, covered with Flemish castle-builders, was markedly different from the Border. It took no part in the Pilgrimage of Grace; nay, it beat off instead of welcoming Nicholas Musgrave and the Westmoreland men, who foolishly rose, after the Yorkshiremen had been put down. The charms of Mary Stuart—"she has sugared speech in store, and spares not to deal it," said Dowry—moved them not, though they raised such enthusiasm among the Borderers, that Mary, in defiance of the law of nations, as well as of the law of hospitality, was hurried away southward. Had Norfolk, instead of weakly obeying when Elizabeth summoned him to her presence, gone north, and joined Westmoreland and Northumberland, it is quite possible that Mary might have been set on the throne of the two kingdoms, Elizabeth being transferred to the irksome captivity in which she kept her "sister and cousin."

From the Jacobite cause, too, Carlisle stood cannily aloof. There had been, indeed, a strange scene when James the Second's son was born.

"They made a bonfire in the market, and drank wine till they were exceeding distracted, throwing their hats into the fire at one health, their coats the next, their waistcoats at a third, and so on to their shoes. Yea, some threw in their shirts, and ran about naked, like madmen, which was no joyful sight to the thinking and concerned part of the Protestants who beheld it."

But these were the officers of the garrison. Not one Carlisle man—nay, not one Cumbrian joined the rising of 1715, "that rabble of Highlanders and parcel of north-country jockeys and fox-hunters." Both Lord Derwentwater and Foster of Bam-borough came from Northumberland. The Carlisle men did signalise themselves by running away, four thousand of them, the

whole "posse comitatus" under Lords Carlisle and Lonsdale, and the very loyal Bishop Nicholson, the moment they got in sight of Derwentwater's fifteen hundred. In the '45 they were equally unwarlike. Colonel Durand, with his eighty invalids, and four gunners, got together some seven hundred militia, and four hundred townsmen, who waited to see if Marshal Wade would come from Newcastle to relieve them, and, finding he did not, they slipped out, and so forced Durand to surrender. The Mayor and Corporation had to go on their knees and give their keys to Prince Charlie. After Culloden, the garrison which Charles Edward had foolishly left in the Castle, defended the crumbling walls till they were battered down, and then surrendered, the Duke of Cumberland allowing no terms, save "the King's pleasure." Better had they fought till every one was shot or cut down, than to be handed over to George's tender mercies. The militia escaped even censure; the clergy, who had been vehement on the Hanoverian side, had the mortification of seeing their Cathedral used as a prison—"made so filthy, that six weeks' work, and the burning of much tar and sulphur, scarce made it fit for service."

Of the prisoners, the chief men were sent to London to be executed; the rank and file, mixed with those who had surrendered at Culloden, were divided into batches of twenty, of whom one was chosen by lot for trial—all such being convicted—the remaining nineteen being transported to America. Of course, Father Rappock—the priest whom Charles Edward had made Bishop of Carlisle—was among the condemned. As he was led out to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, he noticed one of his companions looked downcast.

"What the deil are ye afeared of, mon?" he cried, gleefully. "We'll not have a Cumberland jury to try us in the next world."

After this Carlisle settled down into the ways of peace and prosperity. Its sole quarrels were at elections, when it was Lowther against Howard, and both against Musgrave. Sir James Lowther actually got control of ten seats, and for a time made Carlisle itself a pocket-borough. He was rewarded (1784) with the Earldom of Lonsdale.

The place owes something to foreigners—in 1747, Hamburg merchants started a woollen mill—but more to a Newcastle firm, which set up calico weaving and

printing. When the great change of the seventeenth century began, it owed a good deal to Lord Howard of Nawarthe—Scott's "belted Will," but by his peaceful ways little deserving that warlike title. He pacified the Border, so that of the old customs, few are in vogue save "hand-fasting," which dates from the days when churches were in ruins, and priests only came round once a year.

Carlisle's only literary man is Isaac Tullic, who described, as he saw it, the siege, by Lesley and the Scots (1644), which became a blockade, lasting till horseflesh was a luxury, and thenceforward dogs and rats were the usual food. When the townswomen had become so mutinous that they begged the governor to fire on them, he asked for terms. But, hoping to better these, the officers made Lesley's envoy drunk, with a barrel of strong beer, "that had been secreted by a cautious divine," they themselves drinking only water. Next day, Lesley sent a graver person, "but he also fell a victim; the notion being to show the Scots' general that they were abounding in all things." They did get very good terms; but the Cathedral suffered, the Scots, contrary to express agreement, pulling down cloisters, chapter-house, Canons' houses, and half the nave, to get materials for repairing the Castle.

As to the Cathedral, no "restoration" can bring back its original dignity; but the city looks so trim and thriving that it is hard to believe that grass grew, not so long ago, in the chief streets, the bye-streets were unpaved, the houses unpainted, and the gutters full of filth. At that time, a southern visitor says of the Cathedral:

"It is more like a great old country church, ne'er beautified nor adorned one whit. The organ and voices did well agree, the one being like a shrill bagpipe, the other like a Scottish tune. The sermon, in the like accent, such as we could hardly bring away. The communion also was administered and received in a wild, un-reverent manner."

Allowance being made for southern prejudice, this is doubtless a true picture; but Carlisle may say both of city and Cathedral: "We have altered all that." It has grown in population; thirty-six thousand in 1881, against six thousand a century earlier (in 1720, only two thousand); and it has grown much more conspicuously in cleanliness and the outward signs of wealth.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE BRADA MINING COMPANY, LIMITED.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

"It won't do, Zeb; it won't do."

And the miller rose from his seat, took down his long clay pipe from the rafters, and lighted it in front of the big fireplace.

Zebediah Quirk felt it was all over with him then. He gave a little gasp, but still kept his chair, and, with eyes bent upon the flags, sat there fumbling with his cap. He was a pleasant-looking young fellow, short and slender in figure, with smaller hands and feet than is usual with those who have to live by manual labour; neat in his dress, and very quiet in his tone and manner. He was about to speak, when the miller, turning again to him, went on:

"It's not that I've got anything against thee, lad. Don't run away with that notion in thy head, Zeb. If thee wast more of a man—more like John Senogles, now, who can mow his acre and a half in a day easily—I shouldn't like thee any the worse for it; an' if thee sometimes took a mug of ale, or, maybe, a drop of whisky for thy stomach's sake, instead of goin' about with them Rechabite chaps, who seem to think that cold water'll float them to heaven, there'd be some chance for thee, lad. But, settin' all that aside"—the miller stopped and blew out a great cloud of smoke—"there's the money."

"I've got the shop and the stock," urged Zeb, raising his eyes for one moment to look at the miller, a sturdy, square-shouldered man, so grey that it seemed as if flour had been sprinkled freely over face, hair, beard, and clothes.

"The shop and stock!" exclaimed the miller, with scorn. "An' what does it come to? Put it in land. There's nothing like land, Zeb. When thee's just lookin' at it the corn is growin'. Well, what's the value of thy shop an' stock in land? Five acres, eh? Four, more likely. There's John Senogles with twenty, all his own, an' a house—"

Zeb rose rather impatiently.

"You've no call, Master Radcliffe," said he, "to be always throwing John Senogles at my head."

"Nay, nay, lad," said the miller, soothingly; "that wasn't my intention at all. It was only of my daughter I was thinkin'. If I let her marry a man who can't afford to

keep a wife I shouldn't be doin' my duty."

"But I shall be making money," said Zeb.

"I don't deny it's possible, Zeb, though I don't see much prospect of it myself. What with the fishin' going from bad to worse, an' the men livin' on credit, the grocery business is the worst in the whole Isle of Man. But, anyway, can thee keep a wife on what thee will make? Next year's harvest won't keep the mill goin' this year, will it?"

"No; but we are both young, and can wait."

"Thee can wait, lad. A man can marry at sixty—if he's a fool. But can a gel wait? Her chances come when she is young and has good looks. If she don't take them then, she loses them altogether. Is it fair, do thee think, Zeb, to spoil a gel's life for a whim?"

The lines about Zeb's mouth had been hardening as he listened, and the look of pain had deepened in his soft brown eyes.

"Whim or no whim," said he, "it shan't be said that Brada's life was spoilt by me, Master Radcliffe. She shall be free to marry whom she will; she shall not be bound to me at all. But here, before you, her father, I solemnly bind myself to her."

"That's not fair to thyself now," said the miller.

"Then there's none can grumble at it," returned Zeb. "I swear to be true to her, come what may. But let her do as she will; marry, if she sees somebody to suit her; stay single if she don't. I will wait for her, though she needn't wait for me."

The miller, taking the pipe from his mouth, looked silently at Zeb beneath his shaggy grey brows.

"Shake hands, lad," he said at length. "We'll remain friends, anyway."

So the two shook hands, and then Zeb wished the miller good evening, and went his way. As he passed through the garden he plucked a rose from a bush which grew beside the wicket gate; but when he reached the little bridge, he leaned against the rail, and, not thinking of what he was doing, pulled the flower to pieces. The red leaves fell into the water, and went racing towards the wheel. But Zeb did not know they were there, for his eyes were dim with tears.

Down the steep side of the glen came a

girl, swinging her straw hat to and fro as she moved swiftly through the golden gorse and purple heather. There was a ruddy glow of health in her pretty, sun-burnt face; her dark hair tumbled about her shoulders in picturesque disorder. As she walked, she carolled like a lark. But, presently, at the entrance to the village, she noticed the solitary figure standing on the bridge, and her song ceased.

"What has the rose done to you, poor thing, Zeb?" she asked, mischievously, coming upon him unawares.

At the sound of her voice all the colour left his face. He crossed the bridge to make room for her to pass over.

"Good evening, Brada," he said, awkwardly, without looking at her.

"What's amiss with you, Zeb? Have you and she fallen out between yourselves?"

"What she is that?"

"Why, the she that gave you the rose, to be sure," answered Brada, saucily. "Oh, yes, come now, don't be denying it, Zeb. There's a deal more going on among the Primitives than praying and preaching."

In spite of his youth, Zebediah Quirk was a shining light among the little band of Primitive Methodists in the glen. But the miller was a staunch Churchman, and his daughter followed in his footsteps, affecting to make merry at Zeb and the Primitives, yet pleased enough when they spoke of him as having "the gift of tongues."

But Zeb was vexed now that her heart should be so light, when his was so heavy; and he answered her more roughly than was his wont:

"It's well for you to be able to laugh. I can't laugh, I can tell you; but then, perhaps I care more for you than you for me. I always said so, didn't I? Anyway, it's all over between us now. You are free to marry——" he was about to say "John Senogles or anybody else," but checked himself and substituted, "any person you please."

"What's this, Zeb?" she asked, more gravely now. "Who has been speaking against me? What have they been saying?"

"Nobody has been speaking against you. That would be impossible. But your father says I'm not man enough, and have not money enough to marry you. Twenty acres is your value," said Zeb, rather bitterly. "I'm only valued at four—too

much, by your price. Do you know anybody with twenty acres, Brada — any marrying man, I mean?"

"That's just your nasty way of putting it," said Brada, with an indignant toss of the head. "If you think to better yourself with me by speaking in that way of father, you'll find yourself mighty mistaken. John Senogles wouldn't have done it, whatever you may say of him. So there, my man!"

And she stepped on to the bridge.

She was slowly crossing the bridge now. Zeb waited a few moments, then walked a little way, stopped, and looked back. Brada had stopped, too, pretending to be unable to open the gate. Both were yearning to speak, to make friends again; to part, if part they must, as lovers should. One word would have brought them together; but neither could utter it. It was not pride, but sheer awkwardness that held them silent. And so they drifted apart, just as the red sun was sinking over the sea at the mouth of the glen, Brada entering the pretty little mill, while Zeb went slowly through the village towards the beach.

And now who should be standing at the door of the inn but John Senogles himself, a big, yellow-bearded man, with enormous limbs, and the strength of an ox. By his side was another man, fat and podgy; with a round red face, smart clothes, a diamond pin, and an ostentatious watch chain. He was a stranger to the district. Zeb had never seen him before, and would hardly have noticed him now had he not heard that Senogles had lately been about a good deal with a Mr. Johnson, who was lodging at the inn.

"Hullo, Zeb!" cried Senogles, "going to the beach, eh? It's no use, for the tide's high, and there's no sand to be got."

This was meant as an allusion to the practice—alleged against some grocers—of adulterating sugar with sand; and Senogles bellowed with laughter at his own wit.

"When you've got a new joke, Senogles," returned Zeb, coldly, "come and tell me; and then, maybe, after you've explained it to me, I'll laugh at it for you."

"It seems you've got your preaching coat on, Zeb," said Senogles, shaking with laughter. "Give us a bit out of your next sermon. I'll stand you a glass of ale if you will."

Zeb was in no humour to be turned to ridicule; least of all by John Senogles. He crossed the road, and, with clenched fists, confronted the big farmer grinning down at him from the doorstep.

"Look here, Senogles," said he; "you mind your business, and I'll mind mine. Don't you interfere with me, and I'll not interfere with you. If you go meddling with me——"

"Well, what?" enquired Senogles, seeing that Zeb hesitated.

"Why, I'll teach you better manners," said Zeb, defiantly.

Senogles laughed again; but this time a little awkwardly, and with an uneasy glance at his companion. Not that he was frightened of Zeb. He was too big and too powerful to fear getting the worst of a scrimmage; but he had no wish to enter upon anything of the sort. So he said:

"Why, Zeb, what has come over you this evening? It was only my fun, man. I wasn't meaning you any harm."

"Well, keep your fun to yourself another time," returned Zeb. "I want none of it."

And he walked off.

He carried his head rather higher than usual, for he felt that he had lowered the colours of the big, bullying farmer—his rival. In the midst of his pain, this thought gave him a certain grim satisfaction. But afterwards, when he reviewed the events of the evening, there came the reaction. He had always been on the best terms with his neighbours, and now, in one day, he had spoken disrespectfully of the old miller, parted in anger from Brada, and quarrelled with John Senogles. Surely there must be something wrong here—something for which he was to blame, and for which he could make amends. After what had occurred he could not very well go to Brada or her father; but he could go to Senogles. And, before Sunday, Zeb decided that he would.

John Senogles owned a small farm away up on the mountain side; part of it being so steep that the crops, when cut, had to be brought down on a sort of rough sleigh. Zeb started to walk to the farm on Saturday afternoon. He had no parents; only a sister whom he supported; and she took care of the shop during his absence. He felt, in some strange way, that he was doing what Brada would have liked him to do; and the feeling seemed to lighten his burden. For it was a long, tough road that lay before him—not this one, up

the mountain side; but that other, which led to all that he had set his heart upon. To win Brada—that was his sole ambition; and how to make enough money to please her father was more than he could imagine.

Presently, he left the path, and—crossing a stretch of moorland slanting sharply upwards, so that he seemed to look almost straight down into the little glen below, with its mill, and stream, and cottages straggling towards the sea—he arrived at the shaft of an old mine, or, rather, the commencement of one. There are scores of these abortive borings scattered about the island; the success of one or two mines having led to attempts at many.

Zeb sat down on the rubble mound for a few moments to take breath, and, as he did so, a glint of sunlight from the quarried rock caught his eye. At first, he paid no heed to it. He was too much engaged in thinking of some way to make money. But of a sudden, this bright spot in the rock seized upon his attention. He sprang up excitedly, and scrambled forward to examine it.

It was lead ore mixed with spar. Zeb had no doubt about that, for he had seen the ore many a time down at the mine on the other side of the mountain. There was a good deal of it lying about, some of the pieces on the ground being very rich in metal. Zeb picked up one of them—the best he could find—and, with tottering legs, staggered out again into the bright sunlight.

He was overwhelmed by his discovery, for it promised him all that his heart desired—union with the girl he loved above the whole world. Here, ready to his hand, was untold wealth. True, it was upon land belonging to John Senogles; but that was of no consequence. For the Manx law differs from the English law in this—that, while the landlord in England is supposed to own a solid wedge of the earth, right through to its centre, in the Isle of Man he owns only the surface, all below belonging to the Crown, from whom mining leases may be acquired by anybody who wishes to do so, and is prepared to compensate the landlord for "surface damage." Zeb, therefore, thought he saw his way plain before him.

But, first of all, being a cautious young man, he carried his specimen of ore down to Nat Teare, a friend of his, who was employed in the mine on the other side of the mountain.

"Hist, Nat!" said he, when he had dragged off his friend to a quiet corner.

"What's this?"

"Lead ore," answered Nat.

"You are sure, boy?"

Zeb's questions were so peculiar, and his manner was so excited, that Nat looked at him with amazement.

"What joke is this, Zeb?" he asked.

"Do you think I'm such a fool as not to know our own ore?" And he pointed at the ground around, which was strewn with pieces of similar ore.

"But it's not your ore," cried Zeb.

"It's mine. It comes out of my mine. And you shall be the captain of it, and we shall both make our fortunes, and marry the girls of our choice, and be happy ever after, Nat. What do you say to that, my boy?"

Nat took off his hat and scratched his head. He had begun to think that Zeb, in spite of his Rechabite notions, had taken to drinking. But, after a time, the whole thing was made clear to him. He examined the ore again, and pronounced it to be equal to the best they had got. Finally, though he was not told the exact position where it had been found, he expressed the opinion that it probably came from another part of the same lode as they were now working. Zeb had risen in his estimation immensely.

"I'm your friend, Zeb," said he, warmly.

"Don't you forget that. Stick to me, and I'll make a fortune for you."

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that Zeb went with a very pre-occupied mind next day to the little Primitive Methodist Chapel. Indeed, his utterances were so confused and so disjointed as to disturb the faith of those who looked up to him for light and guidance. As bad luck would have it, he had announced the subject of his sermon on the previous Sunday. It was "The Blessings of Poverty;" and every argument that he had to enforce was in direct conflict with his present opinions. Nor was this the sole cause of his uneasiness. For, although the quarrel with John Senogles had ceased to worry him, and had almost entirely passed from his mind, he was distracted by fears lest somebody else should make the same discovery as himself, and should anticipate him. He felt that until he had the lease safe in his possession, he should have no rest.

So, early on Monday morning, he took with him all the spare cash in the house,

and going first to the local bank, obtained an advance upon the security of his shop. With this money in his possession he hurried off to Douglas, called at the office of the "Crown Receiver," and applied for a mining lease to cover the whole of the north side of the mountain. To meet any claim for surface damage, he deposited the money he had brought with him. His disappointment was intense when he learned that the business could not be completed there and then as he had expected. It was torture to him to have to wait, dreading some accident, some horrible mischance, which might destroy all his hopes of happiness. But the period of suspense came to an end at last. Zeb got his lease, and with it in his pocket, felt himself to be the happiest and luckiest fellow in the world.

The news soon got abroad, and caused much commotion in the glen. Zeb became quite a hero. His arm was nearly shaken off, so hearty were the greetings he got; if he had not been a Rechabite, all the resources of the inn would have been freely placed at his disposal; there was observable a very general disposition to be seen in his company, to laugh at his jokes, and to quote his sayings; he was run after, not only by Primitives and Wesleyans, but also by Church people, and it would be hard to say which had the keenest eye to the main chance. Only the old miller held aloof, shaking his head rather doubtfully, and watching to see how Zeb would take his good fortune.

"The lad doesn't come near us now," said he to his daughter. "Is he puffed up with pride, do thee think, gel? Maybe it's only offended with my plain language he is; but I've no faith in them Primitives, though I will allow that Zeb's the best of the lot."

Brada defended Zeb stoutly; but her task grew harder as time went on. He was so occupied with his new business that he and she never happened to meet, and she could not understand his continued absence from the mill. Surely it could not be that little tiff they had, when last they met. That would be too ridiculous, for they had had many a tiff before, and Zeb had always come round in the end.

The fact of the matter was, Zeb was keeping away until he had something tangible to offer. The mining lease, in itself, was valueless; he had first to turn it into money. And, having no experience in

such matters and no capital to work the mine himself, he was a good deal bothered.

He had other difficulties to contend against, too; among them being the animosity of John Senogles, who was perfectly furious. Meeting Zeb in the village, one afternoon, he swore at him in a voice that echoed away up the glen, and called him the lowest, meanest sneak that ever walked on shoe-leather.

"What did you say to me?" he shouted. "Don't you interfere with me, and I won't interfere with you," that was what you said, Zebediah Quirk. And then what did you do? Went straight up to my farm and got a mining lease, to turn the place upside down, so that no decent man will be able to live in it. That's what you done—robbed me, you preaching little hypocrite. Went behind my back and robbed me of my rights—that's what you done, you who said you wouldn't interfere with me. Curse you, I've a mind to break every bone in your body." And the big fist was clenched and raised threateningly.

But Zeb, so defiant when all things had been going against him, was meek enough now in the hour of his good fortune. He answered gently:

"Don't be angry with me, Senogles. I have done nothing a man need be ashamed of. I have acted strictly within my rights—any other would have done the same; but I will go beyond my rights, if you will let me. If the mine turns out a success, you shall have a share in it, I promise you that."

"If the mine turns out a success!" sneered Senogles. "A likely tale. There is not a ha'porth of lead on the whole of my farm, and you know it."

"There is," said Zeb, quietly. "There are heaps and heaps of splendid ore."

"That's a lie," roared Senogles. "Look here, lads," added he to the fishermen, whom the noise had drawn around, "don't one of you put a farthing in this swindle. Don't I know my own land? The whole thing is just to spite me. He wants to drive me out of my farm. I tell you there is not a ha'porth of lead upon it."

"Then what is this?" demanded Zeb, producing one of his specimens.

"Ore from the other side of the mountain. The whole thing is a plant, lads," said Senogles, again appealing to the spectators. "If this ore was found on this side of the mountain, it was brought from the other. There's none of it upon my farm, at all. Now, do you see what

the hypocritical little rascal has been at?"

The fishermen looked at one another out of the corners of their eyes. They could not bring themselves to believe this charge against Zeb; and yet Senogles spoke so positively. But one of them, more outspoken than the rest, said:

"Aisy, man, aisy. Thy tongue's goin' too fast. Zeb's not the sort to do this thing, at all."

By the stream, which ran by the roadside, Mr. Johnson—the smart stranger staying at the inn—had been standing, watching the bees in a cottage garden. Although he had shown no interest in what was being said, not a word had escaped him. And now he approached the party rather hurriedly.

"Come, Mr. Senogles," said he, taking the big farmer by the arm, "you have gone too far. You own the surface of your land, and know all about it, I am sure. But you don't know—you can't know—what lies beneath. If Mr. Quirk says he has found lead there, you must believe him."

"Must I!" exclaimed Senogles, with something like amazement.

"Why, yes, of course," declared Mr. Johnson, in his offhand manner. And the fishermen all stared with open mouths, wondering who this stranger could be, for they had never before seen the big farmer look so small. "Come, my good fellow, you can't deny the evidence of your own eyes."

"Well, I'll be shot!" stammered Senogles, with the same air of complete bewilderment.

"I'll guarantee the genuineness of this ore," proceeded Mr. Johnson, in a tone which could be heard by all around. "If there is a good lode of the same quality where it came from, it will be worth twenty-five pounds a fathom, at the very least. You may take my word for that, Mr. Quirk. I am a mining engineer"—he glanced round with importance—"I have had great experience in many parts of the world, and I know what I am talking about."

This speech created an evident sensation. Senogles, who had moved off and was waiting about for Mr. Johnson to follow, did not hear the latter part of it; but the fishermen were profoundly impressed. As for Zeb, now that his hopes had been confirmed by so eminent an authority, he could scarcely contain himself. He thought

of Brada, and tears came into his eyes; he grasped Mr. Johnson's hand, but could not speak.

"Will you be at home at seven this evening, Mr. Quirk?" enquired Mr. Johnson, in an undertone. "I have something particular to say to you. At seven sharp, remember." And he went after John Senogles.

ON PROFESSIONAL IRRESPONSIBILITY.

THERE is a great deal of irresponsibility abroad in the world which were better out of the way. The poor man who marries a wife upon fifteen shillings a week, and ten years afterwards has seven children and an income the same as at first; the manufacturer of wall-papers of a cheap kind, the ingredients of which may or may not poison the person upon whose walls the papers are pasted; the inventor or retailer of very gross slanders, which are as likely at least to blast the character of their object as are the wall-papers to disturb the health of those who come under their influence; the man or woman who, though afflicted by a dolorous, or even horrible malady, yet considers this as no obstacle to his or her marriage, and who is by-and-by the parent of a child or succession of children in whom the hereditary evil straightway declares itself—these are a few chance specimens of the commonest kinds of irresponsibility. Each and all ought to be fettered. But who is to do the work? It is difficult to say, indeed; for each of these irresponsibilities—save perhaps the wall-paper one—is of a kind to be obviated only by such restraint upon the action of individuals as would to many of us seem the mark of a tyranny of the most obsolete and culpable kind.

"What!" the hard-working youth in the receipt of but fifteen shillings a week might indignantly exclaim to the State official who forbade his banns for State reasons, "because I am poor, am I not to have a wife? Well, if that's Monarchy, give me a Republic!" or "If that's your Republican way of doing things, one may go to Turkey for a free life."

And of course the girl would second her angry sweetheart in his outcry. With handkerchief to her bright, fond eyes, she would proffer the worth of her affection as adequate plea for the disregard of all those

rules of prudence which a properly paternal Government would fain enforce upon, if it could not instil them into, its subjects.

The manufacturer who, to the injury of the public, puts strychnine or arsenic into his manufactures, may indeed be more easily deterred from a continuance of such disastrously irresponsible conduct. But, first of all, such action on his part must be made a penal offence. Until then, it may be feared that he will have more regard for his banker's balance than for the men and women—strangers to him—who buy his papers, even though they may be doomed, with mathematical sureness, to suffer thereby a great deal of pain, and perhaps death itself. However, this is a kind of irresponsibility that will, sooner or later, be checked. We must have inspectors of wall-papers, even as we have inspectors of factories and schools; and then it will, so far, be well with us.

The third instance of irresponsibility—that of scurrilous and slanderous conversation—is much more difficult, nay, perhaps impossible to bridle. The only way will be to regenerate the human race “*ab ovo*,” and that were a task to tax the wit of the cleverest of us. Perhaps, however, here also, a very considerate Government—maternal, or even grandmaternal, rather than paternal—might be able to do something. If the scope of the law on libels were extended to include tea-table backbiting, or even market-place gossip of a kind that tends to detract from the good character of any individual, perhaps the result would be beneficial. But the “perhaps” is rather a rickety one; so that even the most hopeful believer in the perfectibility of the human race—towards the attainment of which such an extension of this law might be supposed to help—ought not to build much on it. And, upon the whole, it would make social intercourse such complex fencing, and, to the timid, such a stupefying terror, that the disease itself, unpleasant though it may be, would probably soon be universally preferred to the remedy.

We English have already been vilified sufficiently, for our want of conversation, by the more glib nations of Europe. If such a law as this came into force, there would be nothing for it but to subside into complete taciturnity. And even then it is to be feared that, ere long, Mr. Edison would come to the aid of the lawyers with some dire invention which

should convict us of actionable conduct if we had but the mere germ of a scandalous thought within us.

As for the fourth instance in our selection of typical cases of irresponsibility, that really ought to be upon the same footing as the projected marriage of an impecunious man and woman, who have no assured hopes of anything except offspring.

If the State does not take up this question, let Convocation think about it.

Why should it not be made a valid reason for refusing to consecrate a matrimonial alliance? To my mind, and surely in the esteem of all thinking people, it is as improper for a scrofulous man to marry a woman under the taint of lunacy as for an ordinary man to marry his grandmother.

The Church would forbid the banns in the latter case. It were well if it would do the same in the former case also.

There is something specious, indeed, about the claim that a man may make to go “the way to parish church” as he pleases, with “liberty withal, as large a charter as the wind” and the tables of affinity allow.

But one look at, or thought about, the children who are the result of a scamper over this broad champaign of liberty, severs the plea to the very root.

In fact, this is one of the examples which prove that unmitigated liberty is, at times, worse than an iron restraint.

The man who acts persistently for his own pleasure, without regard for the consequences, and with, of course, no care for the good of others, is not much better than one of those Oriental fanatics who, now and then, runs amuck with the deliberate design of slaying or wounding all who come in his path.

The tendency of the times is to misinterpret strangely that noble word “liberty;” or to view but half its meaning as the whole.

We have done with despots; but not with the despotism of philosophic phrases.

There is really no saying what the cycle of events will shortly bring us to; but it is not a little curious that our professors of evolution—the teachers who assume to be head and shoulders above common priests and schoolmasters—remind us that

we should do the best thing possible for our race, if we were to recur to that old Greek custom whereby the magistrates of a city—with appalling tyranny and frigid disregard for sentimental attachments—mated by law the most muscular of its youth to its most beauteous maidens, and summarily put an end to children manifestly unfitted for the battle of life.

But, besides these common cases of irresponsibility, there are many others, not less grave, by which we are all liable to be affected.

There is judicial irresponsibility—a very serious thing, even with us; but trebly serious in lands where men of law are not, as they certainly are, as a rule, with us, men of honour.

There are also medical irresponsibility and educational irresponsibility.

Not that the list is yet exhausted; but these will be enough for our turn.

In State affairs—upon which the eyes of the public are nowadays keenly concentrated—the statesman, who acts to the detriment of his country, may, indeed, escape being impeached, but he cannot by any means avoid the obloquy which falls heavily upon him from a million or two of his fellow-men.

The assumption is, that his position is an unpleasant one. So it is; but not so disagreeable as to deter him from putting himself again at hazard just as soon as his political discretion will allow. Hard words do not break his head. Indeed, the harder they are, the better for the victim; inasmuch as the reaction will, by-and-by, be strong in proportion to their severity. And so he errs and errs until he dies, or until the country is tired of anathematising and forgiving him, turn by turn, and decides at length to consign him to the oblivion which accompanies retirement from public life.

Now, upon grounds of common sense, such a man ought not to have the measure of irresponsibility that he has.

It is all very well to say that it is his constituents' business; that, if they agree to be reconciled to him, or to condone his misdeeds, no one has any farther right to interfere; and that such interference, if it took place, would be a wrong done upon the liberty of the subject.

These are venerable arguments that do not satisfy. It were more reasonable, far, to argue upon plainer bases; to say outright, that, since human nature is what it is, it is inevitable; that, in any repre-

sentative assembly of human beings, there must be a proportion of good men and bad men, whether their goodness or badness be of morals or capability; and that, granting this, it would be as just to expel one man from the assembly because of his virtue, as to expel another because of his inefficiency or corrupt life.

There may be something of sophistry in this. There is certainly much of paradox. And yet, unless it appear emphatically in the charter of his representation that the deputy is the representative of none but those of his constituents who are morally or intellectually like himself, it is difficult to see who has the right to cast the stone at him for his misconduct.

In judicial matters it is otherwise. The Judge is not a representative of the people. In a sense, indeed, they are his subjects, though he has not the same aspect towards them all.

He is chosen or nominated for his office as a man superior to other men in training and abilities—and presumably in morals also—and the sword and the scales are the very significant symbols of the power he exercises.

Of old the King was the Judge as well as the Sovereign of his people; even as at the present time the King of Montenegro plays the part in his public square at Cetinje. But civilisation has now generally divorced the two conditions.

And inasmuch as a modern constitutional Sovereign is King or Queen rather by courtesy than aught else, while the modern Judge is as much an arbiter of life and death as the Sovereign of former days himself, the Judge is the most respectable individual in a modern State.

With us, indeed, who put the power of a death sentence in the hands of our Judges, and exercise no material censorship over their work, the office of Judge is peculiarly solemn and autocratic.

It may be doubted whether it is good for them and good for us that they should have the irresponsibility they have.

True, there are Courts of Appeal. But if one set of Judges contradict another set of Judges, and there the matter ends, the Judges whose judgement is set aside by their superiors are not likely to be much or long distressed. The irritation passes.

In Norway, however, and perhaps elsewhere, it is very different. The Judge who is convicted of an erroneous judgement has to pay for his mistake. He is fined as if he were a criminal. The con-

sequences are obvious. He takes a very profound interest in his work; and so his own ends and those of the State are served simultaneously. He cannot afford to forget the responsibility of his position more than once or twice in his career. He could, perhaps, tolerate with equanimity a certain amount of censure. But a fine of a thousand crowns is worse than much censure. The sting of it lingers long.

Now we are not called upon to determine which course is the better, that of Norway, or our own. But it is permissible to observe that, whereas a fine may be an excellent stimulus for a Judge in office, it seems somewhat an inequitable and undignified kind of stimulus.

If the Judge had done wrong with his eyes open, of course he is much to blame. But the public is ever ready and able to call him to account in such an eventuality; and the slight itself will be a fair incentive to him for the future.

If, on the other hand, he is charged with defective balancing of evidence, it is a misfortune rather than a fault in him, and fining will not make him a more capable Judge. The words of the copy-book may be tendered on his behalf—"humanum est errare," though they hardly seem to justify the irresponsibility that will still largely remain to him while he sits upon the judicial bench.

Medical irresponsibility is not less serious in its effects upon individuals than judicial irresponsibility upon the community. Here, also, we may congratulate ourselves upon the honourable spirit among our doctors, as among our lawyers. If it were otherwise, the career of the average medical man might be a succession of tragedies, more or less veiled.

To be sure, there are many cases in which a doctor's error of action brings trouble, and even disgrace, upon him. But, for the most part, his patients give themselves up to him, like a resigned criminal to his executioner. He has power of life or death over them even more emphatically than the Judges of the land. For the Judges cannot touch those who are not criminal, whereas the good and the bad alike have recourse to the doctor.

If the doctor puts all his conscience as well as all his humanity and skill into his work, well and good. If not, some one is likely to suffer. But whoever suffers, it will rarely be the doctor, though he may have agreed to regard his profession with less reverence and awe than is becoming. The

victim will assume that the suffering he undergoes is an inevitable part of the malady itself, or of the remedy for the malady. Only when he cannot doubt that the doctor is to blame for it, will he say a word against him. But it may then be too late.

It would be interesting and immensely instructive to know the psychological history of an average medical man. As a young practitioner, until his "nerve" had become hardened, did he not feel as anxious about an operation as the subject to be operated upon? How many times in the first year of his public practice, does he suppose that he treated patients as they ought not to have been treated? Does he, perchance, in the innermost recesses of his conscience, find himself guilty—through unskilful or thoughtless treatment—of the death of a patient or patients? And, if so, was the secret entirely his own; or was it shared by the patient or patients who died to give him experience? Finally, does he now, in the maturity of his skill and practice, ever consider a patient rather as a piquant enigma, than as a human being as sensible of pain as himself? It were quite impossible to make doctors adequately responsible to the community for their professional conduct. They must reckon their responsibility a personal charge.

Once again. What of educational irresponsibility? I do not, of course, mean that the gentlemen who teach "*hic—haec—hoc*" to little boys are engaged in a task of such immediate importance as the professional tasks of doctors or Judges. "*Hic—haec—hoc*" is but the prologue. It is when the mind, rather than the memory, has to be impressed, that the schoolmaster's chief responsibility begins. He has so much very plastic material before him, and which will probably retain through life the impression he gives it. If this impression be a worthy and graceful one, so much the better for schoolmaster and scholar. Otherwise, so much the worse for them both.

Let us advance a step, and consider how University Professors stand towards their students. They are really in almost as responsible a position as, according to the old myth, was Prometheus himself, as the originator of human beings. Prometheus set his creations adrift in the world to act as they were able; and a pretty pile of misdeeds he has since had

the grief to witness. So also with the Professors. They know that their students are asking of them such information as shall enable them to go through life with credit to themselves, and to the profit of their fellow-men. Perhaps they are able to help their petitioners as a brother helps his brother. Perhaps, however, they are themselves in need of help; and then their aid is not worth more than a snap of the finger. And perhaps, also, from personal pride, rather than confess themselves indebted to their predecessors for the common rules of safe progress in life, they teach new doctrines, which are, in fact, pernicious, in spite of the attraction which novelty gives them.

It is the last of these three orders of Professors that ought to bear the consequences of the misuse of their responsibility. And yet, how stands the case? No one indicts them, though this or that one of their students acts infamously or iniquitously in direct accordance with their teaching.

It was for them to make or mar the man. They have marred him, and it does not trouble them.

Akin to this is the influence of literature. It is, of course, common knowledge that a book often does more for a man's spiritual development than aught else.

The converse is not less true.

None, except writers themselves, know the potency of their work. A reader may be ruined in soul by the insidious turn of a phrase. Half a suggestion may do more for him than fifty Sunday sermons. But, though the writer be as emphatic an agent of moral destruction as the keeper of a Whitechapel Thieves' Academy, who is to bring him to account?

The reader may multiply cases of such irresponsibility. Perhaps, some day, when Utopia is established, we shall be able to get rid of them all. But it will need delicate legislation, and a signal purification of the human conscience.

THE STORY OF DORIS CAIRNES.

A SERIAL STORY.

By the Author of "Count Paolo's Ring," "All Hallow's Eve," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XII.

"PAUL, will you take me up to London with you, to-day?"

All through the short summer night,

Doris had lain awake, thinking over her conversation with Paul, with the picture he had drawn of Laurence's desolate home and ruined life ever before her eyes. She saw him degraded, despairing, lost to self-respect, and the respect of his fellow-men, sinking lower and lower till he reached that lowest depth of all, from which it was well-nigh impossible to rise again. And ever as she pictured it, there rang in her ears Paul's last sentence: "If you wish to save him, take the only way; you alone can do it."

The hot blushes burnt in her cheeks as she thought of what the words implied; of the only way by which Laurence's salvation might be won. And again and again she told herself that she could not take it. That womanly pride and modesty revolted from it, told her that it was impossible, that she could stoop so low as to sue for what he had never offered; to be the wooer instead of the wooed! But, as her agitation subsided, as the night grew first older, and then faded into the grey dawn of morning, which, in its turn, brightened into the rosy sunrise, the calm which the stillness of night rarely fails to bring to troubled minds came to her. Love clasped hands with womanly modesty, and they stood before her, and looked at her with reproachful eyes.

"We are twin sisters," they seemed to say, "how could we be at enmity with each other?" and pride hid her face, and stepped aside, silenced by love's earnest voice; and the way, so impossible at first, grew straight and clear before her. Her face was pale, and her eyes heavy with their long vigil; but there was no irresolution there when she entered the breakfast-room, where Paul was standing by the window, looking moodily out into the garden. She went up to him, and looked straight into his face.

"I have been thinking over what you said last night, Paul," she said, in her quiet voice, "and I know that you are right; that the way you pointed out to me is the only way; so I am going to take it. Will you take me up to London with you, to-day?"

"If you wish it, Doris."

Paul said no more. He gave one long, searching look into her eyes, then turned away from her; and when, after a short silence, he spoke again, it was only to ask if the train by which he intended to travel would be too early for her.

Mrs. Robson looked very much surprised,

when told of the sudden visit to town; but she did not ask any questions, or offer to accompany Doris. Perhaps it was not altogether the correct thing for Doris to go up to town alone with Paul Beaumont; but she was different to most girls. She was so self-reliant, and so well able to take care of herself, that it was impossible for the most careful chaperon to feel anxious about her. Besides this, Mrs. Robson knew that if Doris had desired her company, she would have asked for it, and she was too wise to offer it unasked.

It was nearly five o'clock when Paul and Doris reached London. The journey had been very silent; Paul leant back in his corner with his face hidden behind his newspaper, and Doris sat in hers, and turned over the pages of her book now and then, but gave but very scant attention to what she was reading. Paul took her to an hotel, where she had occasionally stayed with Mrs. Robson during their short visits to town, and, after a hasty dinner—to which Doris was too excited, and Paul too preoccupied, to do justice—Paul put Doris into a brougham, which he had ordered to be at the door at half-past six, and having given the driver the address, said quietly to her:

"Would you like me to go with you, Doris? I will, if you wish it."

"No, thank you."

Doris looked back at him with a quiet smile. She was very pale, but quite calm and composed, only her clear voice had a little nervous thrill in it, which Paul had never heard there before.

"I think I would rather go alone! I am playing my last card now, Paul, and whether I win or lose, I think I would rather play it alone."

"You will not lose," Paul said, confidently.

But, in spite of this assurance, Doris felt her heart beating fast and furiously, when, having reached Laurence's house, she went up the steps and rang the bell. She had to ring three times before any one answered it, and then a slatternly woman opened the door a few inches and stared rudely at the visitor, before she condescended to answer.

"Yes, Mr. Ainslie is in—he is in his studio; but he never sees any visitors," she said. "Are you one of them models?"

She looked Doris up and down with an insolent curiosity which brought the hot colour to the girl's cheeks; but she had

learned how to deal with people like this woman, and how easily civility is purchased by gold. And so she took half-a-sovereign from her purse and put it in the eagerly-outstretched hand.

"He will see me. I am an old friend. No, you need not trouble. I know the way," she said, quietly, as the woman eagerly begged her pardon, and offered to show her upstairs; and she stepped past her, and ran lightly up the staircase, where the dust lay thick on the carpets and balustrade, to the door of the studio.

The drawing-room door was open, and as she passed, she paused, and gave a hasty glance within at the neglected, dust-covered room. Ghostly figures seemed to rise before her as she looked: Laurence's beautiful, vulgar wife in her gay dress; little Doris's white-robed figure; Laurence with the frown upon his face, which she had so often seen there, as he listened to his wife's loud laugh. They seemed to look at her with threatening faces, to ask what she did there; and she turned with a pale, scared face, and flew up the staircase, to the studio, and without giving herself any time for deliberation, gave a timid knock at the door.

"Come in!" Laurence's voice answered, and she opened the door and entered the well-remembered room.

Laurence did not look round. He was standing before an easel, palette and paint-brushes in his hand, putting a few touches to the already nearly-finished picture. It was a large picture, well conceived and boldly drawn, but, so Doris saw at a glance, crude, and hard, and much inferior in execution and finish to his former works. Laurence himself did not seem satisfied with it, and, as Doris entered, with a muttered oath he flung the brush from him.

"Well, what do you want?" he said, sharply.

"It is I, Laurence."

Doris went forward and held out her hand to him. He did not take it at first; after one startled exclamation of "Doris! You here!" he drew back, and stared at her with surprised, troubled eyes. All at once, as he met her clear, steady gaze, a sudden consciousness of the degradation and shame into which he had allowed himself to sink, came to him, and his life, seen by the gaze of those serene eyes, became so black and loathsome a thing, that he shuddered and trembled, and knew he was not worthy even to touch that outstretched hand. He gave a sharp cry of pain.

"Oh, Doris, why have you come? This is no place for you," he cried.

And Doris answered very quietly:

"I have come because you need me, Laurence. Oh, yes; I know all. I know you have been weak and wicked; that life's battle has been too hard for you; and that you have turned coward and flung your weapons away, and turned your back on the strife. I know—there were plenty to tell me—that you have degraded yourself and your art; that you were drifting away hopeless and despairing to a depth from which my love could not rescue you." Oh, the pity, the ineffable love and pity in her clear eyes, in her sweet voice! Laurence could not bear to meet those eyes, to listen to the words which filled his heart with pangs of shame and bitterness. "And so, since you would not answer my letters, I came myself."

"You ought not to be here, Doris. Did Paul Beaumont tell you?" and Laurence turned a shamed, fierce look upon her. "I sent a message to you, by him."

"It is because of that message I am here," Doris answered, still in her sweet, clear voice. "Yes, he told me all; oh, he hid nothing from me! He did not gloss over matters, I assure you. He told me all, and then he said—he was always our truest and best friend, Laurence—'There is only one way to save him, and only one person who can do it. If you want to save him, take that way.'"

"What way?"

Laurence raised his haggard face from the hands where he had hidden it, and looked up at her eagerly at first, then with a great awe and reverence in his eyes. Doris stood before him. She had flung her hat aside, and the light fell on her chestnut hair and on her pale, earnest face, and flashed a strange brightness into the eyes she raised to his. She held out her hand to him.

"Laurence, it is yours, if you will take it," she said, simply. "It looks a weak and feeble thing to trust to, I know; but I feel sure that it is strong enough to save you, for love will strengthen it, dear—the love which has always been yours, which always will be yours. Will you not take it? It is the only way," Doris cried.

But Laurence, after one long, startled look into her face, turned away from her.

"Too late—too late, Doris," he said.

"It is not too late. It will be soon; but it is not too late now," Doris cried,

passionately. "I can save you, if no one else can. Oh, Laurence, let your thoughts go back to the past, when we were boy and girl together; when we swore to ourselves that nothing should ever come between us, that you would belong to me, and I to you, always! You broke that vow once, dear—I am not saying it to reproach you—but I have kept it; I have loved you always. I rejoiced at your success, and sorrowed at your fall as keenly as if it had been my own success and my own fall, and not another's. And now I come to you, and I ask you, for the sake of those old days when we were all in all to each other, to let me help you; to let my love strengthen you, and raise you to a greater height than even that from which you have fallen. It can do it, Laurence; I know it can."

But still Laurence kept his face turned away.

"I cannot; I am not worthy!" he muttered. "Oh, Doris, you don't know all the vileness of the life I have led lately. If you did you would shrink from me instead of— Oh, my dear, my dear;" and now he threw himself at her feet, and hid his face among the folds of her dress, and kissed them. "I am not fit, even, to touch the hem of your garment. Oh, leave me, Doris. It is too late to help me now," he sobbed.

There came a strange, tender light over Doris's face, as she bent and twined the thick curls, in which there was many a white hair now, round her fingers. Ah, he had not altered after all; he was still the old Laurence she remembered so well; the passionate, impulsive Laurence, who was so ready to err; so ready, too, to repent, and ask forgiveness for the pain his folly had caused her. She smiled and stroked his curls with her caressing fingers.

"I have shown you the way; won't you take it, Laurence?" she said. "Won't you take the hand and the love I offer you? Must I go away ashamed, knowing that I have crushed down my pride, and offered myself in vain? That you will have nothing to do with me? Oh, I can't believe that, Laurence." And now her voice shook a little, and grew less clear and sweet. "You could not be so cruel when I—love you?"

"Do you really, Doris?"

Laurence raised his head and looked up at her. She did not speak; but something in her face answered him, and long-sleeping hope awoke in his heart, and conquered the

despair that had well-nigh killed it, with all other good things there. Since Doris loved him—loved him in spite of all—nothing was impossible. If she could forget and forgive the past, others could forget and forgive too. The future, lately so dark and hopeless, grew bright and clear, illuminated by the light of that perfect love which could endure all, and forgive all; which nothing could alter or change. He drew a deep breath and rose to his feet, and took her hands and kissed them.

"I won't make any rash vows, Doris," he said; "but—I will never forget this. And I won't thank you, now, dear. My life—the life which you have saved from despair and ruin, which you alone could save," he cried, passionately—"shall show you how I thank you; how I bless you for this."

"Paul said it was the only way," Doris said, quietly; and then, for now that the battle was over and the victory gained, she felt faint and weary, she went on in a most matter-of-fact tone: "I wish you would give me a glass of wine and a biscuit, or some tea, Laurence. I did not eat much at dinner, and I feel quite faint."

It seemed so sweet and strange to Laurence, when, by-and-by, after some delay, the surprised servant brought the tea, to sit opposite to Doris at the little table, which he had brought out of one of the sitting-rooms into the studio, for Doris would not go into the drawing-room, and watch the little white hands flitting among the tea-things, and the sweet face that blushed and glowed, and grew quite beautiful under his adoring eyes, as she—resolutely avoiding all painful topics—told him the home news. So sweet and strange, and so much more like a dream than a reality, that more than once he put out his hand and took hold of her dress, to make sure that he was not dreaming—that it was Doris who was sitting opposite to him; that she had condoned the past, and forgiven him, and that life—only a better and happier life than he had ever

known before—was beginning afresh for him.

It was nearly eight o'clock before Doris remembered that the brougham was still waiting for her, and, with a shrug of her shoulders, and a merry "See how you make me err against Mrs. Grundy's decrees, Laurence," rose to go. As she did so, one of the yellow roses she wore in her belt fell to the ground. Laurence picked it up, but when she held out her hand for it, he smiled, and shook his head.

"Leave me some little trace of your visit, Doris, otherwise, when you have gone, I shall think it has all been a dream," he said.

Doris smiled and took the fellow rose also from her belt.

"See, you shall have them both," she said. "They are all in bloom now, and the Red House is covered with them. I am going back to-morrow, Laurence, and you will come with me?"

"If I may," Laurence answered.

He looked round the dusty, untidy room, when, having put Doris into her carriage, he ran upstairs again, still with that odd feeling of unreality. Was it really true? Could he be the same man who, only that morning, had declared to himself that the burden of life was growing too insupportable to be borne any longer, and that the sooner it fell from him the better? He, whose every nerve was throbbing with delight and passionate exultation, in whose breast life's pulse was beating so strong? And then his eyes fell on the roses which Doris had placed on the dusty mantelpiece, and they told him that it was no dream, but a blessed reality. That love had held out a strong hand and raised him from the bondage of sin, and that he was a free man once more. And the first use he made of his recovered freedom, was to take a penknife and cut the canvas on the easel into strips.

"I can do better than that now," he said.

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